

Iron County Register.

BY ELI D. AKE.

IRONTON, MISSOURI.

IOLANTHE.

BY C. LANGTON CLARKE.

EVERARD DUNBAR, alone in his little room in the office of the Tolchester Courier, scribbled the last line of a bunch of copy, glanced hastily over what he had written, and then rose and stretched himself.

"I think I am getting a little sick of it," he said, audibly. "It is a ridiculous occupation, and I ought to have my foot down when old Blue nose got me into it. I have been a success certainly, but then I might have been equally successful as a cook or a man-milliner, and that would have been just as absurd for an able-bodied man. I am tired of it and disgusted with it, and for two pins I'd chuck it up to-morrow."

He knocked the ashes out of his pipe against his heel, and laughed rather grimly, as he did so.

"If they could only see me," he said, "how some of them would open their eyes; how they will open them some day; and now for dinner and to dress for the small-and-early at the Walcotts."

Everard Dunbar was a young man who, some years previously, had drifted into journalism after undergoing the initial stages of preparation for several professions, and had done fairly well. As a reporter he had proved himself better at serving up his news in attractive form than in hunting for it. He had a good style, and on more than one occasion had written a flippant editorial on local politics, which the chief editorial writer, jealous of any encroachment on his special department, had nevertheless liked well enough to use. He had been finally assigned to special work, and had proved a success.

The Tolchester Courier was a paper which had a large circulation, and particularly its Sunday edition. Its departments were generally conceded to be almost equal to those of any metropolitan journal, and of all its special features the brightest, in the estimation of the reading public, was its "Woman's Empire," conducted by "Iolanthe." Iolanthe's "Hints on Fashions," "Medical Suggestions," "Answers to Correspondents," and "Side Talks with Girls," were universally read, not only by the women folk of Tolchester and the surrounding district, but often by the sterner sex also.

It was rather late when Dunbar, in company with his particular chum, Cassels, also of the editorial staff of the Courier, presented himself at the Walcotts' dance and was effusively greeted by the large circle of guests.

"Naughty man," she said, shaking her finger at him, "to come so late, when I have been dying to introduce you to the nicest and prettiest girl I know. Come along now; and Dunbar was led across the room to where sat a tall, decidedly good-looking girl, with a rather haughty expression.

"Alma," said Mrs. Walcott, "let me introduce Mr. Dunbar, a great friend of mine; Everard, this is Miss Tressilis."

The young lady bowed formally, and an air of indifference, which suddenly changed to one of animation when Mrs. Walcott continued:—

"Mr. Dunbar, dear, is one of our rising journalists. He is on the Courier."

"I am very glad to meet you," said Miss Tressilis, smiling pleasantly. "A dance? Oh, certainly," and she held out her programme, on which Dunbar, unrebuked, proceeded to inscribe his initials several times.

The two hours that followed were very pleasant for the young man, and after he had danced three times with Miss Tressilis he was inclined to agree with Mrs. Walcott in the opinion which she had expressed about her.

It was while they were seated in a remote and comfortably cushioned nook after the fourth dance together, that Miss Tressilis broke a rather long silence by saying:—

"You are on the Courier, are you not, Mr. Dunbar? Mrs. Walcott mentioned it, I think, when she introduced you. Are you an editorial writer?"

"I have not yet climbed so high," replied Dunbar. "At present I do special work."

"But I suppose you know everybody on the paper, don't you?"

"Well, not every one, Miss Tressilis. You see there are a good many in the business department and the pressmen and stereotypers and makers with whom I am brought very little into contact. My acquaintance is pretty much limited to the editorial floor and the composing room."

Miss Tressilis did not seem to be paying much attention.

"I wonder whether you would do me a great favor?" she said.

"If it is in my power you may rely on me," replied Dunbar, gallantly.

"Tell me," said the girl, fixing her large and luminous eyes full on Dunbar—"tell me Iolanthe's real name."

Dunbar felt himself growing red.

"It is an office secret," he replied.

"Why are you so anxious to know?"

"Because I love her," replied Miss Tressilis, in a voice that quivered with emotion. "She is so true, so noble-hearted, so feminine; don't you think so?"

"Feminine?" replied Dunbar; then, recovering himself, "oh, well—yes, if you say so, no doubt she is."

"Do you know," continued the girl, "for weeks it has been my dream to meet her, to put my arms about her and kiss her and tell her how I love her. Is there any possibility of my dream coming true, Mr. Dunbar?"

"Er, well, really, you know, hardly, I am afraid," replied Dunbar. "She is very anxious that her identity should be kept secret. She dreads publicity and all that, you know; she is the sensitive and retiring sort."

"I know she is, dear," Dunbar winced—"but if you will not tell me her name, at least tell me what she is like. No, stop, I will describe

her to you and you shall tell me whether I am right. In the first place she is tall and dark."

"You are right, so far," replied Dunbar, glancing almost unconsciously at a mirror that hung opposite.

"And she is very handsome, is she not?"

"Well, no, I am afraid not," was the hesitating reply. "At least not particularly so," he added, seeing the disappointment in the face of his fair questioner.

"But I know she has lovely eyes, large, and dark and soulful."

"Dark eyes? Oh, yes, certainly."

"And soulful," insisted Miss Tressilis.

"They are full of something," replied Dunbar; "perhaps it is soul, I am sure I don't know. You see, I never gave the matter very much thought."

"I can see her," said Miss Tressilis, with a dreamy look in her own beautiful eyes, "sitting in her office, fitted up like a boudoir, with lovely pictures and clock-knacks all about her. No one could have such beautiful thoughts unless they were surrounded by beautiful things. No woman at least."

There was a minute's silence, and then Miss Tressilis turned to her companion.

"I am going to confide in you," she said. "I am one of Iolanthe's most constant contributors."

"Yes, I know you are," replied the young man, absently.

"How could you possibly know that?" asked the girl, opening her eyes.

"I enclose my name, but my nom de guerre, or whatever you call it, is quite different, no clue at all. How could you possibly know?"

"Surely," said Iolanthe, "the editor of the paper, surely, Iolanthe does not show the letters she receives to others in the office. Oh, that would be horrible! If I thought some man had seen those letters I should die with mortification."

"Do not disturb yourself," he said. "On my honor, no one sees those letters but Iolanthe, who would deserve a good thrashing if it were otherwise."

"What a horrible way to speak of a woman!" said Miss Tressilis, evidently much relieved. "But tell me, how did you know that I was a contributor?"

Dunbar flushed a little. "Well—you know," he said, "any one not a fool could see that. No woman could take such an interest in the editor of a page like that without—oh, without writing to her and telling her, and all that sort of thing, you know."

"But you spoke with so much certainty," said the girl; "quite as if you knew all about it, but as if you merely surmised it. I tell her all kinds of things, and ask her advice about, oh—lots of things that a girl wants to know."

"Personally," said Dunbar, "I think these question columns for women's pages are rot. They pay the paper, of course, or we wouldn't run them; but—don't be offended—I don't think they are quite healthy. A girl writes to me—that is, of course, supposing I am a woman editor—and wants to know whether I think the young man who is paying her attentions is really in earnest, and then she tells me what he does or says, and how he looks at her, and all that sort of thing. How am I to know from such data?"

If I reply, I fear the young man is trifling with your affections. I may be doing a very estimable young fellow a great injustice; if, on the contrary, I encourage the girl to receive the attentions of Iolanthe, she will be scoundrel. And then, again, it's not good for the girl to be exposing her secret thoughts to a stranger like me, instead of her mother. I—er—I am still speaking, of course, from the standpoint of a woman editor."

"It seems almost a pity you are not one," replied Miss Tressilis, with some resentment. "You seem to know a good deal about it; and I don't agree with you at all. I think it is good to have some one—some kind, loving woman, such as I am sure Iolanthe is—to confide in and ask advice from."

"Even in matters of the heart, as I believe these affairs are called?" hazarded Dunbar.

"Yes, even in that; I know a girl who was saved from a great deal of misery by Iolanthe. She wrote the girl a private letter, exposing a young man who was paying her great attentions."

"But that was because the girl mentioned the name of the cad in question in her letter. Iolanthe happened to know a good deal about him."

"I suppose you would think that rather a sneaking thing for a woman, but pardon me, how do you know that the name was mentioned?"

Dunbar looked slightly nonplussed.

"Why, how could Iolanthe have possibly warned the girl against any special man if she did not know him?" he said.

"No, I suppose not," replied Miss Tressilis, in a rather doubting voice. "Tell me, Mr. Dunbar, do you know Iolanthe's real name?"

"I can't say much as to admiration," replied Dunbar, "but I will admit that I am exceedingly solicitous about her welfare."

"One of her best friends?" queried the girl in a low voice.

Dunbar laughed bitterly. "I don't know," he said. "Some people would tell you that I am Iolanthe's worst enemy."

"You are very mysterious," said the girl, almost fretfully, "and I hate mysteries. I always think the Sphinx must have been an awful old bore."

"Which is as much as to say that I am an awful bore?" asked Dunbar.

"Oh, no, I didn't mean that, but you see you have done nothing but talk of Iolanthe, and one is apt to get a little tired of one subject."

"I cried Dunbar in astonishment, at this instance of feminine inconsistency. "Why, you—"

"Oh, yes, I know what you are going to say, I broke in the girl, "but let us change the subject; you have been talking the Sphinx, now we will be the Delphic oracle, or whatever it was that used to answer foolish questions from behind the curtain. Look." She caught a curtain that hung behind the seat, and with a pretty gesture shrouded herself in it. "Now, I give you three questions. So think of something important."

It was while Dunbar was hesitating

over how personal he dare make his inquiries that Cassels' most unimpeachable voice broke in:

"Well, Iolanthe, old man," as the speaker laid a hand on Dunbar's shoulder, "if you have got all the fashion pointers you need and have entertained enough of your interesting contributors, let's be hoofing it home."

In speechless horror Dunbar gazed into the face of his friend, and saw out of the corner of his eye the curtain swing back and a pale, set face looking at him.

"Oh, I beg your pardon!" said Cassels, thunderstruck at this apparition. "I thought you were alone." He was conscious that he had given his friend away, but happily ignorant of the extent of his ill-doing.

"Is this the person?" asked Miss Tressilis, in a dreadful voice, and laying considerable stress on the word "person," who writes under the name of Iolanthe?"

"Why, you see," Cassels was beginning with a very red face, when the girl turned on Dunbar.

"Are you Iolanthe?" she asked, sharply.

"There is not much use in denying it," replied Dunbar. "Yes, I am."

"I should not think it would hurt you much to deny it," said Miss Tressilis, with bitter scorn, "an untruth or two extra would not make much difference."

"I think, old man, I will wait for you in the library," said Cassels, and fled ignominiously.

"I am not aware of having told any untruths," said Dunbar, trying rather unsuccessfully to assume an air of offended virtue. "I do not think I have stated anything that was not strictly so, and besides, I was anxious that my secret should not leak out."

"So you are Iolanthe," said Miss Tressilis, looking at him with an expression which called the blood into his face. "You, a man with a strong body and with brains, and yet you prefer to twaddle to a lot of women in print instead of doing a man's work."

"You spoke differently of my work just now," replied Dunbar, a feeling of annoyance overwhelming him. "I characterized it as twaddle then, you characterized it as twaddle here."

"That was when I thought it was written by a woman," replied the girl. "Oh, it is horrible! ghastly! To think that you have read my letters. How hateful you must have grinned over them! You are not very likely to marry, Mr. Dunbar, now that you have seen what an unutterable donkey a woman can make of herself."

This was a change of front with a vengeance.

"I told you just now that I heartily disapproved of women's pages," replied Dunbar, "but you disagreed with me. I am at least consistent."

"And you mean to imply that I am not, I suppose, but how dare you call yourself consistent? If you disapproved, why did you lend yourself to encouragement?"

"We have to do a good many unpleasant things in our business," replied Dunbar, rather weakly.

"Unpleasant? Dishonorable, you mean," replied Miss Tressilis. "No, pray, don't try to excuse yourself, you are not only dishonorable, but ridiculous, and I, and she added, with a little gulp, "I suppose I have made myself ridiculous too, but then I didn't know, and you did. I think I will wish you good evening, Miss Iolanthe. No, thank you. I can find my own way back without an escort. I should say chaperon, I suppose." And with these words Miss Tressilis arose and departed, leaving her companion looking decidedly crestfallen.

When Dunbar went down alone to the cloak-room, he found Cassels waiting for him with contrition stamped on every line of his features.

"Oh, all right!" replied Dunbar, shortly. "I suppose it had to come out sooner or later, though the time was rather inappropriate. Yes, she was one of the flock, all right."

"She didn't seem to take it very kindly," ventured Cassels, with a lively recollection of a set face and flashing eyes. "Was she mad?"

"Just a little," replied Dunbar, with a mischievous laugh. "Oh, yes, she called me dishonorable and ridiculous, and left me standing there feeling both. And the worst of it is that she is just the nicest and sweetest girl I ever met; but my goose is cooked now. She will never recognize me again."

"Oh, yes, she will," replied Cassels, hopefully. "She is hot now, but she is sure to be interested in you."

"You can bid good-by to Iolanthe," said Dunbar after a short silence, "a long and fond farewell. To-morrow after I have had a little talk with Blue nose, Iolanthe's funeral will be conducted with neatness and dispatch and you fellows won't have to strain yourselves to keep your wives and sweethearts from finding out who she is."

"And the paper?" queried Cassels.

"The paper?" replied Dunbar, with emphasis—"the paper be damned."

It was just a year after the Walcotts' party that Mr. and Mrs. Dunbar sat in their little drawing-room. Mr. Dunbar in an easy-chair, with his wife comfortably established on the arm.

"Do you remember what I said to you a year ago to-night, Everard?" asked Mrs. Dunbar.

"You said so many things, dearest," replied her husband. "Please particularize."

"I asked you whether you thought I should ever be able to put my arms around Iolanthe's neck and kiss her, and tell her how much I loved her."

"I remember very distinctly," said Dunbar, "and what a shock the question gave me."

"And you said it was extremely unlikely?"

"Well," replied Mrs. Dunbar, putting her arms around him and imprinting several vigorous salutes on his lips, "it only shows, Everard, that whatever else you may be, you are a very poor prophet."—Canadian Magazine.

PITH AND POINT.

It is far better to keep out of a quarrel than to fight your way out.—Chicago Daily News.

The supreme tragedy of life is not to fall but to know that you never tried.—N. Y. Herald.

The men and women who are compelled to see the sunrise every morning are those who do the least loving about it.—Atchison Globe.

Clara—"I wonder how Mattie came to marry Fred Somerby?" Bertha—"The most natural reason in the world. Fred had an overcoat that was a perfect match for Mattie's new gown."—Boston Transcript.

Fatal Censor.—"Yes, sir, I assure you, I would be glad to marry your daughter, even if she were poor as a church mouse." Mr. Mousybagge—"That settles you! I don't want a fool in the family."—Philadelphia Press.

Watching His Opportunity.—"Your son has a very robust appetite." "Yes, I'm so ashamed of him. He always overeats when we have company." "Then's the only chance I ever got."—The Tribble Infant.—Cleveland Plain-Dealer.

How It Was Done.—Freshleigh—"Pray, how did you become ossified?" Ossified Man—"In my youth I was nice and soft like you; when I grew up and realized what a cruel world this is, I became hardened."—Ohio State Journal.

Her Dilemma.—Mr. Askit—"And how do you like keeping a diary?" Miss Gage—"Oh, it keeps me so busy writing about what I have been doing that I do not have any time to do anything to write about."—Baltimore American.

DISFIGUREMENT BY SMALLPOX

Prescribed Method of Preventing the Worst Terror of That Disease.

The reported cases of smallpox cause all prudent people living in or visiting New York to resort to vaccination as a precautionary measure. The physicians and public authorities take all necessary precautions for the exclusion of the cases, but suggest on the part of the public the exercise of all other known preventives.

The disease itself has a long, bad history. It was known in India and China some centuries before the Christian era, and during the middle ages its appearance in Europe resulted in frightful mortality, sometimes carrying off one in every four of an infected district, says the Toledo Medical Compend.

The name smallpox is simply a corruption of two words, "small," "pocks," and in the early stages of the disease these pocks may be distinctly felt underneath the skin, like fine shot. Later they appear on the surface as vesicles (or pimples), and finally become the characteristic pustules. Within each of these pustules is set up an active process of ulceration, which if not checked destroys that portion of the true skin involved, and results in the permanent and unsightly system of scars known as "pockmarks."

Dr. Elmer Lee, of New York, a noted specialist, has this to say on the subject of preventing these pockmarks or pits:

"Smallpox pitting can be prevented by applying to the face antiseptic remedies, and I think the most desirable is one made of ozone and glycerin. The glycerin has the body to hold the ozone, and also, being such a very heavy liquid, enables it to be worked into the pores of the skin, and to check fermentative processes that make up a large part of the ulceration. If this fermentation, which is a part of the ulcerative process, can be stopped then pitting can be prevented. The less the ulceration, the less the pitting. If the ulceration can be entirely prevented there will be only an exterior scab which leaves no pit."

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WOMEN OF THE CONFEDERACY.

The Proposition to Erect a Grand Monument to the Women Who Worked While the Soldiers Fought.

Chattanooga, Tenn., Jan. 29.—Col. Garnett Andrews, of this city, prominent as a member of the United Confederate Veterans, and well known throughout the south as one of the foremost lawyers of this section, is at work on the details of a plan, which he will present to the next encampment of the United Confederate Veterans, looking toward the erection of the most costly monument in the United States to commemorate the valor and fidelity of the confederate women.

The agitation among confederate veterans to build a great monument to the confederate women had its beginning here on Decoration day, two years ago, when Col. Andrews, the orator of the occasion, made it the theme of his address. Afterwards N. B. Forrest Camp (local) and the general convention at Louisville of United Confederate Veterans, approved the undertaking, but no plan of action was adopted.

An Associated Press reporter called on Col. Andrews and requested his views as to the progress of the work, the necessity for it, plans of organization and style of monument.

"It is to the discredit of our people," said Col. Andrews, "that no more progress has been made, although I believe that such a response would come in dollars and cents to a canvass for funds, as was never witnessed before."

"The mass of confederate womanhood was, in various ways, an actual auxiliary force, that was nearly, if not quite, half of the army's efficiency. They constituted, for one thing, a great hospital reserve. Besides supplying the medical corps at the front with much of its material, every home was a sanitarium where a sick or wounded soldier was welcome. We had neither factories nor commerce. So they, in large measure, clothed the army. The women and husbands being in the regiments compelled them to manage plantations and farms, and feed the army. They denied themselves comforts, in order that they might give to the soldiers. Their high spirits never drooped; they were cheerful and courageous always. They kept the firing lines full, for they utterly scorned a shirk, and their utter contempt drove malingerers to their duty. The respect in which they were held made them more efficient in this regard than many conscript guards."

"Their disbanded soldiers returned to find them wearing coarse, home-made stuffs and without fabrics of black, in many instances, in which to mourn their dead."

"But they met their returning men and held their hearts up for them as if they had been the conquerors; and gave them sweet encouragement to face the hard life before them."

"There were many deserters from the confederate army, but has anyone ever heard of a confederate woman who turned her back on the cause?"

"In these later days appear the United Daughters of the Confederacy, a well named society of noble aims, and distribute to the surviving soldiers crosses of merit. These decorations come, under God, from the highest worldly source of honor, as we esteem it."

"The general government and the military organizations of those who fought for the Union, have filled the land with thousands of commemorative shafts. But the last man had scarcely fallen when the confederate girls and women began their tireless and persistent labors to commemorate their dead; and if figures could be known, I believe it would appear that their patient little hands have set up more graven stones of honor than all others. The standard of a county without them, and towns and cities teem with the great monuments which they have erected to the confederate dead."

"And the confederate veteran? He has accepted it all with complacency, as though he deserved it."

"As though he had done to give even faint expression of honor to this matchless race of women? If I were to die now, my gravestone would blush with shame at the answer, 'Nothing, nothing.'"

"Yet they still keep on building memorials to the confederate dead. And we, the surviving veterans, keep unbroken our record of disgrace."

"After all they have done, after their love, suffering and devotion, after their beautiful fame we find not a stone to their memory in all the south."

"My idea of what should be done can be told in a few words. Collect at least half a million dollars or more—I believe it can be had—no man would refuse for an object so sacred and popular. With it build one monument—not several inferior ones—but one, so grand in size, rich in material, artistic in design and execution and faultless in location, that the world would applaud and thousands would come to reverse the memory of so great a womanhood."

"I believe in a single working machinery, with few officers, for expeditious accomplishment."

"An executive head of one to three, the fewer the better, should be provided, with power to appoint sub-officers and canvass